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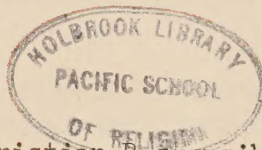
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Orthodox Leader Cites Success of WCC Rhodes Meeting

(Geneva) - A top-ranking prelate of the Greek Orthodox Church said in an interview here that Eastern Orthodox Church leaders regard the recent meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches as "very successful" in building stronger relations between Eastern and Western churches.

Archbishop Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America said that the nine-day meeting (August 19-27) held on the Island of Rhodes gave many Orthodox leaders their first opportunity to learn at first hand about the work of the World Council.

As a result, he commented, "those who attended feel that the World Council is an organ of divine providence to bring the churches together".

The meeting, the first major World Council event held in a country in which the Eastern Orthodox Church is the predominant religious body, had the largest attendance of Orthodox leaders in WCC history.

Archbishop Iakovos made his comments in an interview held at the headquarters of the World Council, of which he is one of the five presidents.

He noted that the Ecumenical Patriarchate gave no authorization for the unscheduled conversations between Eastern Orthodox representatives and Roman Catholic journalists held at the Rhodes meeting.

For this reason, he said, the Patriarchate has "no official knowledge of such talks and ignores the fact that they ever took place".

Speaking officially on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Archbishop Iakovos noted further that the Patriarchate has given no authorization for any conversations between the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Church.

He said that no representatives have been named and there has been no official communication between the Patriarchate and the Vatican concerning such conversations.

He said officially the Patriarchate "knows nothing" about plans announced by the Vatican Radio for conversations with Orthodox representatives in Venice next year.

He stressed that the Patriarchate would not consider the possibility of a meeting with Roman Catholic representatives until it receives an official overture from the Vatican. When that is done, he added, "the Patriarchate will make the decision as to when and where the meeting will be held".

Further, he said, the Eastern Orthodox Church will "never participate in any conversation with the Roman Catholic Church which does not have as its eventual aim the inclusion of Protestants".

Archbishop Iakovos emphasized that "the ecumenical movement is not a movement between Protestant and Orthodox or between Orthodox and Roman Catholics, but a move towards the unity of all Christians".

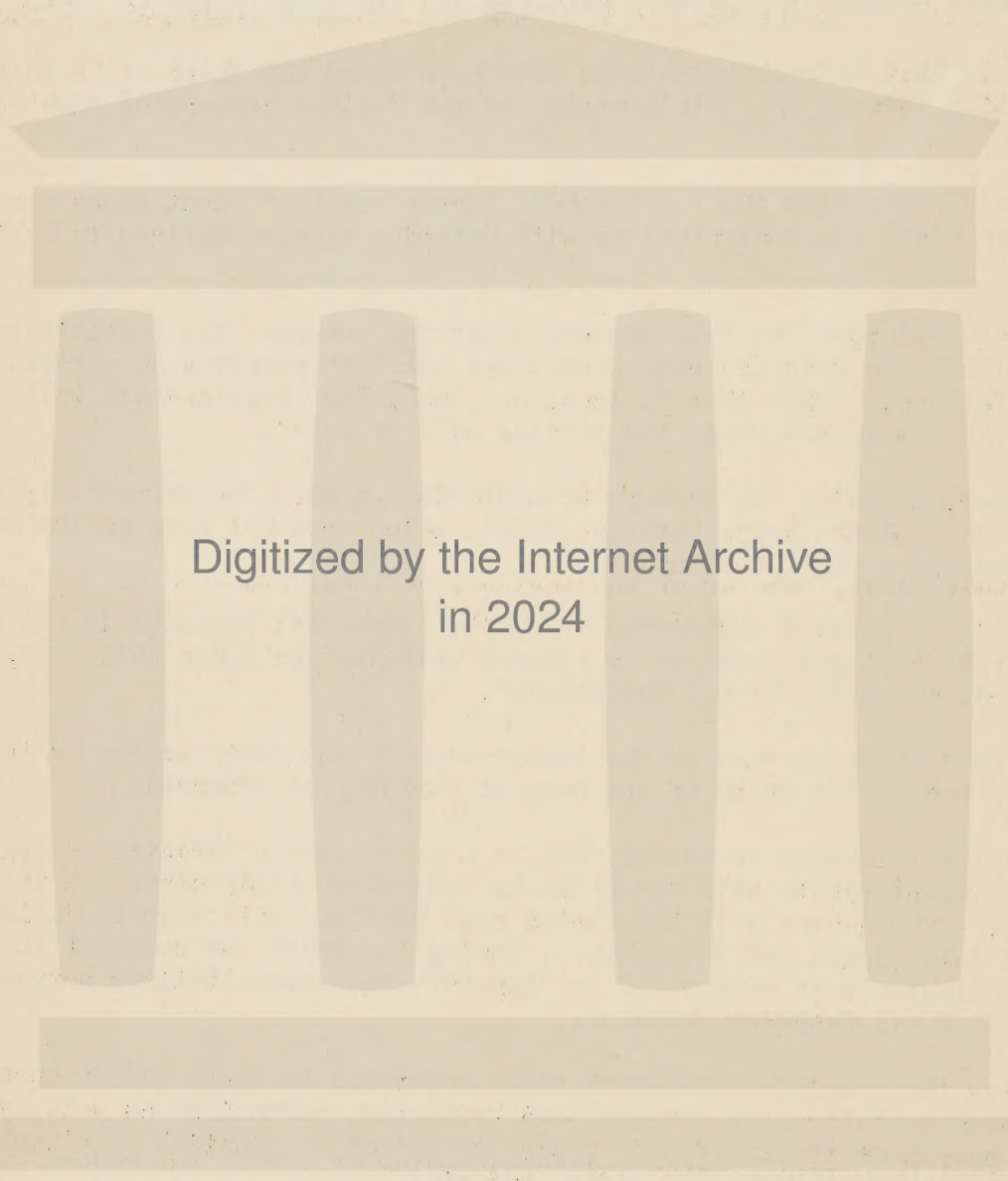
"We are not interested in the restoration of the unity broken by the division with Rome, but in the unity of the body of Christ", he observed.

Archbishop Iakovos announced that as a move towards Christian unity the Ecumenical Patriarchate will establish an ecumenical study centre on the Island of Rhodes. The centre will be started next year and will operate during the months of July August and September. During the first two weeks of July the centre curriculum will be devoted to "pan-Orthodox" consultations between representatives of all Orthodox churches.

During the remaining months it will be devoted to study and discussions between representatives of Orthodox and Protestant communions as well as Roman Catholic representatives "if they desire to attend". Initial enrolment is anticipated at between forty and sixty students.

Archbishop Iakovos said that the plan for the centre grew out of closer relations established between the Eastern Orthodox churches and other member churches of the World Council at the Rhodes meeting.

EPS, Geneva



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Family Planning Held as Christian Responsibility

(Geneva) - Strong support for family planning as part of the answer to the world-wide "population explosion" is given in a long awaited report of a special Christian study group, published in the Ecumenical Review (October 7). The report is released for the first time in the quarterly journal of the World Council of Churches. It is published in Geneva, Switzerland.

Accepting the thesis that the limitation or spacing of children is morally valid, the group held that "there appears to be no moral distinction between the means now known or practised, by the use whether of estimated periods of infertility or of artificial barriers to the meeting of the sperm and ovum - or indeed of drugs which would, if made effective and safe, inhibit or control ovulation in a calculable way."

Noting that the current population explosion which means an annual increase of 50 million persons causes grave "social, political, economic and even religious repercussions", the study group states that "its shock waves buffet countless human families".

Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox churchmen were participants in the group. The Orthodox member indicated that the historic and doctrinal position of that church requires a different approach at certain points. The most notable difference was on the question of family planning. According to Orthodox teaching the only means of family limitation allowable is by the means of marital abstinence.

The study group, made up of theologians, doctors, students of the family and of international affairs, including a number of women, met at Mansfield College, Oxford, England, in April, at the request of officers of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. The group speaks only for itself and its findings do not bind the sponsoring organizations or related agencies.

The purpose was to stimulate more serious ecumenical study on the populations problem and the related question of family planning.

The group held that advances made in medical knowledge give husband and wife the responsibility in Christian conscience to use this knowledge "in relation to the procreation and nurture of children".

After a review of available church statements on responsible parenthood, the group noted some of the recurrent themes as elements of an emerging consensus among Protestant and Anglican churches:

"There is repeated stress on the spiritual character of true matrimony, expressed in physical union and transcending it. The 'two become one' is part of God's grace, to be accepted as a mystery and lived in faith.

The family likewise is surrounded by grace. Children are the gift of God, and procreation is sharing in God's creation.

Christian marriage and family life are consequently described in terms of responsibility; the mutuality of husband and wife, the loving care of parents for children, the love and respect of children for parents, the duties of the family in the service of society, the obligations of all to God and his Church. There is repeated emphasis on the applicability of principles of stewardship to procreation within the marriage bond, and on the duty of the Church to inculcate such principles.

True marriage and parenthood are seen at the same time to be part of the realm of Christian freedom. This means freedom from sensuality and selfishness which enslave. It also means considerable latitude of choice, when the motives are right, in regard to mutually acceptable and non-injurious means to avert or defer conception. Marital freedom, indeed, is the pre-condition of marital responsibility."

The report also recognizes the need for comprehensive and balanced programmes of economic and social development, including an extension of family planning, and stresses the responsibilities which rest upon individual parents, and upon the churches in the guidance of parents.

Dr. Norman Goodall, London secretary of the Joint Committee of the two sponsoring groups and the convenor of the meeting, said that it is hoped the Mansfield Report, the comment of the churches upon it, as well as the statements on the issues by the member churches in recent years, will provide the policy-making Central Committee of the World Council of Churches with data for its own deliberations on this subject at its meeting in August 1960. EPS, Geneva

New Report Cites German Clergy Shortage

(Munich) - The acute shortage of Protestant clergymen in Germany is underscored in a new statistical report issued in Munich by the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD).

The report reveals that more than 3,000 parsonages in Germany are vacant or filled only provisionally.

It notes that the EKD's 13,046 ministers serve an average of 2,256 persons or a ratio of one pastor to 1,500 members in rural areas, and one to as many as 4,000 in predominantly urban areas.

The report says the clergy shortage is particularly severe in East Germany, where almost one third of the pastorates are vacant. This situation is aggravated, it observes, by Communist measures to discourage young people from studying for the ministry. Further, it said, the farming areas, once the greatest single source of ministers, particularly in southern Germany, is today providing only six per cent of the theological students in Bavaria. The total current enrolment at the Evangelical faculties of West German universities is given as about 2,000 as compared to a postwar peak of almost 4,000 in 1951.

To help meet the shortage, the report says, the Protestant churches of Germany have begun to admit laymen without theological training as "academic pastors", following periods of special instruction. There are an estimated 1,000 of these working at present in Germany. At the same time, it said, the churches are recruiting more and more laymen to take over a large share of work in the parishes. EPS, Geneva

"Year Abroad" Plan for Seminarians Announced

(Oberlin, Ohio) - A programme to provide practical means of giving US theological students first hand contact with the world-wide mission of the Christian Church, has been announced by the newly organized National Student Christian Federation of the National Council of Churches (see EPS No. 36).

Under the programme ten seminarians will study abroad for one year at six theological schools located in India, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Ghana and Argentina. They will reside at the schools and take academic work for full or partial credit at the schools they attend in the United States. They will also do field work and take study in specialized areas. The programme has been organized in cooperation with the overseas boards of Protestant denominations.

EPS, Geneva

End of "Cold War" Between Christians Asked

(Chicago) - A prominent Lutheran theologian, Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan, Jr., has called for the "end to the cold war among Christians" and the initiation of "creative dialogue" between Roman Catholics and Protestants.

"For too long both Roman Catholics and Protestants have been content to recite slogans about their side and to repeat slanders about the other side", he declared.

"There are many indications that in place of slogans and slander both sides want dialogue."

Dr. Pelikan, who is professor of historical theology of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, addressed a luncheon at which he was presented the \$12,500 Abingdon Press award for his new book "The Riddle of Roman Catholicism".

Dr. Pelikan said he hoped his book would contribute to conversations between leaders of the two faiths and urged that to be creative they need "accurate information, fuller understanding, candid criticism", and "plain, though not ordinary, good will".

He added: "Christians on both sides will have to admit that they can learn a great deal not alone from one another, but from the non-Christians or at least the non-churchly world about which they often speak so harshly and hypocritically."

The Abingdon prize is given to encourage the writing of books of "outstanding merit" on Christianity. Dr. Pelikan's book, which deals with the history, future and beliefs of Roman Catholicism, was chosen from 125 manuscripts submitted.

EPS, Geneva

Churches Urged to Aid in African Evangelism Efforts

(New York) - Archbishop Theophilus, second ranking prelate of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, has issued an appeal to all churches to help in the evangelization of non-Christians in Africa.

The archbishop, who is a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, reported that his church, to which Emperor Haile Selassie and nearly eleven million of his subjects belong, had baptized more than 100,000 African converts during the past three years.

However, he noted that the 21 million population of Ethiopia includes, in addition to its eleven million Christians, six million Moslems and 150,000 Jews, with the remainder made up chiefly of animists. He stressed that with the new emphasis on self-determination and freedom in Africa today, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as an autonomous and indigenous church is the proper instrument for the evangelization of large numbers of Africans.

Archbishop Theophilus spoke at a luncheon given in his honour by the US Conference for the World Council of Churches. He had been making a two-week visit to the United States as the guest of Archbishop Athanasius Samuel of the Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church.

EPS, Geneva

Dutch Resettled with WCC Aid

(Rotterdam) - Six hundred former Dutch residents of Indonesia who had to leave their homes two years ago because of the political situation have sailed from Rotterdam for new homes in the United States.

They will enter the country under provisions of the new Pastore-Walter Act which allows for the immigration of 3,000 "cases" or about 9,000 "repatriated" persons from Indonesia now living in the Netherlands, before the end of next June.

Of the new arrivals about half are sponsored by the World Council of Churches. The remainder are sponsored by the Christian Reformed Resettlement Committee and Roman Catholic agencies.

Dr. Edgar H.S. Chandler, director of the World Council's Service to Refugees, in Rotterdam for the sailing, noted that "Dutchmen are the best emigrants", and that "without hesitation the WCC goes bail for Dutchmen who as a rule have a great adaptability for living in foreign countries and within a short time begin making positive contributions to the social, economic and spiritual life of the communities in which they resettle".

Dr. Chandler said the World Council will aid in the resettlement of about six thousand of the nine thousand persons eligible to enter the country under the act.
EPS, Geneva

Cameroon Churches Move Towards Unity

(Yaoundé, the Cameroons) - Major steps towards unification of two Presbyterian churches in the Cameroons, West Africa, have been taken here.

Representatives of the 83,000-member Presbyterian Church of the Cameroons and of the African Protestant Church have adopted a statement of agreement looking towards the eventual formation of one church.

The action has been described by the area's daily newspaper "La Presse du Cameroun" as "a decisive turning point in the development of the Protestant Church in the Cameroons and in Africa".

The Presbyterian Church of the Cameroons, which is mainly active in the southern part of the country, was formally established in December, 1957. It is the outgrowth of more than 100 years of mission work of the United Presbyterian Church, USA

The African Protestant Church (formerly the Ngumba Protestant Church) was established from missions of the French Reformed Church. Both churches use the French language in addition to the vernacular.

Following the adoption of the statement of agreement, the representatives voted to mark the date of the meeting (September 3) as the Feast of Reconciliation. They also made plans to hold special ceremonies in both Yaoundé where the Cameroons Presbyterian Church has its headquarters and in the Kribi area, where the Ngumba Church is located.
EPS, Geneva

In Brief

The Lutheran Student Association of America has voted to participate in the recently formed interdenominational National Student Christian Federation. The plan to take part in the new US group reverses a position taken last year when the association announced it would not become part of the federation because it was not "a true student movement". Since then, association officials said, they have been assured federation policies will be the direct responsibility of students. (See EPS No. 36)

